

# Selected Walking & Hiking Opportunities

## Town of Harpswell

There are many opportunities for walking & hiking in Harpswell ranging from shared-use paths to simple trails on remote islands. Many of Harpswell's quiet side roads serve as excellent locales for walking. Listed below are 7 selected walking areas in descending order of walking challenge – from moderate to easy; none have difficult trails. All offer a non-motorized environment with public access and parking (in some places restricted). Some of the properties are privately owned. Stay on the trail. Please respect all regulations and practice 'Leave-No-Trace' trail ethics. Unless otherwise noted, these trails are only open during daylight hours.

**1.) Austin Cary Lot, Great Island:** Extensive salt water frontage on Long Reach & Doughty Cove as well as fresh water wetlands are featured amongst the distinctive topography of north-south running ridges. This 222 acre property is managed by the Baxter State Park Authority for timber harvesting and limited recreational use. Logging and old 'woods' roads form a network of unmarked walking and X-C skiing trails. Hiking is challenging since there is little trail maintenance with the "passive" recreation stipulation imposed on this demonstration woodlot. Some 'bushwacking' required to get to the shore. *Directions: Turn right on Long Reach Lane, which is approximately 1.3 miles south from the Brunswick town line on Rt. 24 (turn at Harpswell Auto). Best parking is 0.6 miles on the right at the west end of the property (although there are other turnoff points*



### 2.) Cliff Trail, Great Island:

A 2.3-mile loop trail crosses near the highest point in Harpswell. This marked trail features a shore walk along the tidal Strawberry Creek, two 'fairy-house' zones and spectacular views from 150-foot cliffs overlooking Long Reach. This property is owned by the town of Harpswell and is located behind the town offices and the Harpswell Recycling Center.

*Directions: The trailhead is behind the town offices on Mountain Road (between Rt. 24 and Rt. 123) --- the far corner of the parking lot nearest the water.*

### 3.) Long Reach Preserve, Great Island:

A 1-mile, marked, loop trail crosses a high ridge with views of Quahog Bay, a 'perched' inland bog and

shore access to Long Reach. Round-trip walking time is approximately 1 hour. The Harpswell Heritage Land Trust manages this 90-acre property. Trail maps are available at the trailhead and at the Land Trust office.

*Directions: The Trufant-Summerton ballfield is located approximately 3 miles south from the Brunswick town line on Rt. 24. Park on the right upon entering the ballfield property for trail access.*

**4.) Thalheimer Farm, Orr's Island:** A farm road and woods trails offer a variety of walking options to experience the fields, orchards and shore of this old farm. This 118 acre property, operated by Bowdoin College as its Coastal Studies Center, makes up the entire peninsula between Long Cove and Harpswell Sound. This is an active research and residence facility. Please stay on designated paths and follow all regulations. Trail maps available at the parking area.

*Directions: Take a right off Route 24 approximately 1.7 mile south of the Orr's Island bridge onto Bayview Road. Follow the road to the end --- about 1 mile --- to reach the farm. Park in the designated spaces (limited parking) on the right & left on the edge of the property. Do not drive past the parking area into the farm. No camping and no groups larger than 10 permitted.*

**5.) Skolfield Shores Preserve.** This 0.8-mile loop trail is nearly level with only moderate grades in some sections. The property features a separate beach access trail to an old stone ferry-wharf, a hemlock forest, lookouts and views over Middle Bay, farm views, two hand-built cedar & hemlock bridges and a view of fertile salt pannes and a salt marsh. This 19-acre property is managed by the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust.

*Directions: The parking area is located 1/4-mile south of the Brunswick-Harpswell town line on the west-side of Route 123. Turn onto Skolfield Place (the driveway to the large farm on the west side of the road) and immediately left into the small parking area. A trailhead kiosk marks the trail start in the parking lot. The trail starts at the right side of the kiosk. Walk up the knoll and follow the signs and white trail blazes.*

**6.) Giant Stairs, Bailey Island:** This trail begins at the eastern end of Ocean St. and provides a 1/3-mile shore walk features open views of the Atlantic Ocean, crashing surf on rocky cliffs (when waves are high) and the noted 'Giant Stairs' formed by differential erosion of an intrusive volcanic dike. The trail then crosses the Macintosh lot (owned by the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust) to Washington Ave. enabling a loop on the road. This trail is located near private property. Please respect the adjacent landowners' privacy and stay along the shore.

*Directions: Approximately 1.5 miles south of the Cribstone bridge on Rt. 24 (just after seeing Mackerel Cove on the right), turn left on Washington Ave. Park at the Episcopal chapel (when there are not services) or carefully along the street so as to not block traffic. Walk east to the end of Ocean St. or south along Washington Ave. about 1/3-mile. Signs are posted at either end of the trail indicating access points.*

**7.) Mitchell Field, Harpswell Neck.** The paved roads (some sections gravel) of this former US Navy facility provide 1.5 miles of shared-use path suitable for walkers, bicyclists and rollerblades. The 116 acre property has woods and open fields that offer sweeping vistas across the bay with views of Mt. Washington (on clear days). Grades are gentle. Portable toilet facilities are provided.

*Directions: The entrance is 6.9 miles south of the Brunswick town line on Route 123 (look for blue water tower). The parking area is along the fence just before the fire station. Although the gates are locked, there is a bike/ped entrance just to the left.*

This information has been compiled as a service to the community. The town does not monitor or maintain the trails. Changes in trail conditions are to be expected. Questions or Comments--- please contact the Harpswell Recreation Department, 833-5771, [harpswellrec2@suscom-maine.net](mailto:harpswellrec2@suscom-maine.net)

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